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# DREAMS

BY

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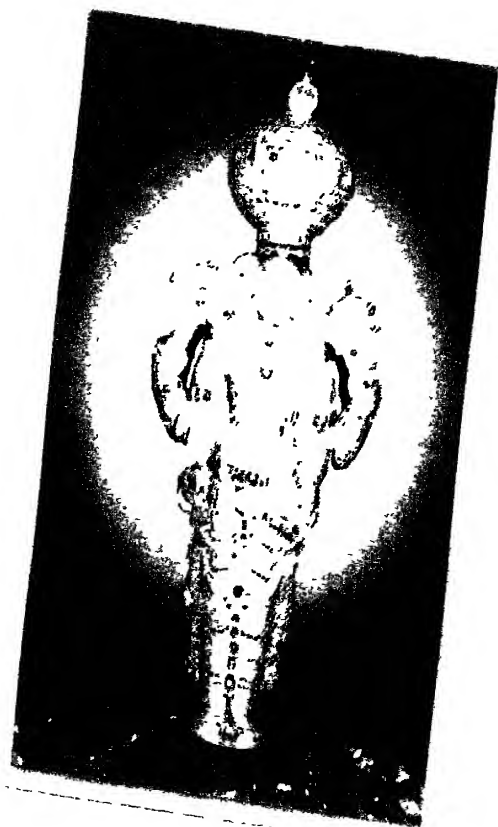
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# DREAMS



## I

### *The Story of the Collection*

ONE'S dreams are primarily of interest to oneself. Their narration may easily become tedious to another. It may also be an unseemly proceeding, a violation of the reticence which is grounded in self-respect. But if dream life is to be discussed at all, the material must be obtained by frank personal testimony. The dreams described must be one's own or the appraisal will be dubious. There is indeed a dilemma involved in the situation. When one's own dreams are under consideration, there is a well-recognized disposition to gloss over whatever seems discreditable and to "justify oneself" on every occasion. On the other hand, the man who sets himself to interpret the dreams of another lacks a vague but significant context, of which the victim is strongly aware even though he cannot communicate it. A strenuous protest will probably



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be raised against many of the inferences drawn. It seems absolutely necessary to respect the dreamer's intuition. He will be found to have vigorous convictions with regard to what is warranted and what is not.

The chief source of entertainment in reading dream passages from the life of a stranger must be found in the running comparison of his experiences with those in the memory of the student. It is likely that there will be apparent many touches of nature that "make the whole world kin." When we are quite spontaneous, as we seem to be in dreaming, we find that we are unexpectedly alike. If it is true, as this discussion tends to show, that dreaming is in many ways like a reversion to childhood, then this likeness is less remarkable. Two adults may appear to have little in common, but they were much more alike in interests and emotions when they were children.

The present collection of dreams was begun in the fall of 1897. The dreamer had just graduated from a scientific school and entered upon a year as assistant in a biological laboratory. For about three months the most

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scrupulous attention was devoted to the notebooks, then the interest flagged somewhat and dreams were recorded infrequently. But from that time down to the present there have been no very long gaps in the series. The dreamer is now past fifty, and he still finds pleasure in making additions to his considerable collection.

He is not at all satisfied with his power to recall the scenes and activities of the night: it is his impression that a great deal that is curious and striking is just beyond recovery. Success in reconstructing dreams requires, first of all, that no concerns shall be pressing upon the individual's attention when he wakes. He must be free to lie quiet and review his recent experiences. They must be rehearsed in the absence of all distracting matters. Obviously this calls for exceptionally luxurious circumstances. When one wakes to the realization that the kitchen fire must be built without delay, dream imagery is likely to be blotted out. It may be said to be light-struck, for it is lost like the photographic negative exposed, when undeveloped, to the glare of daylight.

The author of this collection is not a trained

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psychologist. He has not made any extended study of dream literature but has chosen to remain an amateur rather than to attempt to qualify as an expert in this field. He disclaims any right to pose as an oracle where the dreams of other people are involved. When he read Havelock Ellis's book, "The World of Dreams," it was with singular stimulation and a sense of cordial agreement. His reaction to Freud has often been hostile.

Thirty years have brought to the dreamer the supreme joys and sorrows of a full life. It is not, however, essential to place these events as a chronological background for the dreams. One can rarely discover in the series any registration of them. Marriage, the birth of children, bereavement — these are not set forth in the dreams so that the life story could be reconstructed from their content. While a few exceptions to the rule require to be noted, the acute interests of the home are absent from the dreams. So, also, the World War did not enter them, though the emotional interest of the writer was strongly enlisted and the daily news from the field eagerly scanned. The belief

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is encouraged that the engrossing cares of the day produce a type of brain fatigue which usually holds them in abeyance during sleep. This is consistent with the favorite assertion of the author that the dreams of a healthy man have some of the diverting value of holiday outings. There is a change of scene and often of the actors.

During the last ten years, more or less, the dreamer has made many slight sketches to give prominence to certain features of his stories. Some of these drawings were made many years after the date of the dreams they are designed to illustrate. But if a dream is recalled and recorded, it seems to acquire a timeless character, and just as much confidence is felt in depicting the dream of many years ago as in presenting the most recent. These sketches are technically poor but the task of making them could not be assigned to anyone else. The draftsman would inevitably give false touches. Only the dreamer has seen the vision.

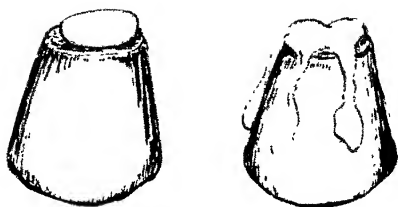
## II

### *The Sensory Content of Dreams*

AS regards the dominant mode of sensation, it is probable that each individual is true in dreams to his waking type. The writer is certainly engaged with visual imagery most of the time, whether he wakes or sleeps. There is remarkably little in the chronicle which could not have a pictorial presentation. (The average dream is much like a moving picture in which the rôle of the dreamer is that of a spectator rather than a performer.) He feels, just as at the movies, that he has no responsibility. He looks at a series of enlivening episodes which he does not seem to invent but which he finds somewhat interesting. Occasionally he participates in the action.

Many people report that the scenery of their dreams is lacking in color. But this is not the case in the present collection. On the contrary, the coloring is bright to crudeness. The





ORIENT AND OCCIDENT

## DREAMS

sky is almost always deep blue and the sun shines with a golden light. Usually the grass is brilliantly green, even though the sleeper may have closed his eyes upon a sombre winter landscape. The replacement of winter by summer is perhaps a simple instance of wish-fulfilment, since the dreamer has an intense dislike for the cold season with its long hours of darkness.

Here is a dream in which color appeared particularly significant. Someone presented the writer with a precious stone, and at the same time spoke of its interesting history. The gem had been treasured by two prominent families in India and had then come into an English household. It was a discoidal jewel, and clear yellow like a topaz. It was not faceted, but somewhat rounded like a drop of thick fluid. It was about as large round as a cent. The recipient of this choice gift treated it with scant respect. Placing it upon a block of charcoal, in shape a truncated cone, he attacked it with flame and blowpipe.

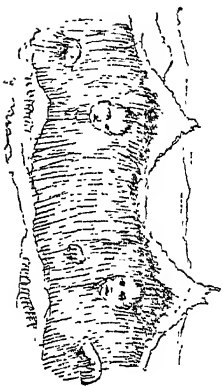
The gem was readily fused, almost as if it were wax. Its substance ran down the slopes



## DREAMS

of the cone and congealed in three irregular beads. Two of these were about the color of the original stone, the third was water-clear. When this detail was observed, the dreamer perceived in it a reference to the former ownership of the jewel. The two beads of amber recall the two families of Oriental complexion, the single bead without color bears some relation to the British period. As usual in such perceptions of analogies in dreams, the symbolism seemed have a deeper significance at the moment than it did when reviewed by daylight.

The features of a dream picture have a frequent tendency to undergo mutations. Bergson has pointed out that the dissolving-view principle is again and again represented. Objects are recognized at one moment as existing in a certain form and the next they are differently conceived. For example: two swimmers were seen making their way toward the beach just in advance of a crested wave. Then the motion ceased and the picture resolved itself into two men seated in chairs having high backs. The arrest of the peaks of the wave furnished material for the chairs.



MUTATION



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Another illustration of a rather more complex sequence may be supplied. The dreamer was asked by his housekeeper to dispose of some worms which she had swept up in cleaning a room. They were brought to him in a paper bag. He proceeded to heat water in a square pan which he placed on the gas stove, and into this he shook the worms. They appeared much like the worms found in apples, that is, each was about three quarters of an inch long, had a red head, and was deeply segmented. Under the influence of the hot water the segments fell apart and looked like white beads. They maintained for a little a grouping such that the eye could reconstruct each worm, then the segments mingled promiscuously. Finally they swelled and darkened, with the result that the water was all absorbed by them and the pan seemed to contain baked beans.

Next to visual impressions the most common sensations reported in these dreams are those of motion. When we dream, we may at one time exult in extraordinary powers of movement and at another be distressed by the feel-

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ing that we cannot move at all. In the first case we float, fly, or fall. Falling dreams may be marked by terror or characterized by entire nonchalance. It is evident that, when we have the sense of being motionless, we are better informed of the condition that actually exists than when we traverse space. It is, therefore, reasonable to associate dreams of free movement with rather deep sleep and those of immobility with sleep which is shoaling toward waking. In fact, one may pass through a transition from full command of the muscles to a realization of utter paralysis in the process of being aroused.

Sensations from the skin are lost early in the drift from waking to sleeping, and they are not common in these dreams. Ellis has pointed out that one is encouraged to dream of flight or falling by the circumstance that no consciousness exists of anything in contact with the body surface. It is easy to convince oneself that as one goes to sleep there is a period in which the position of the limbs is still recognized, though they have ceased to feel any external support. Our records contain no men-

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tion of sensations of warmth and only one of cold.

Odors in dreams are said to be infrequent. They have been represented several times in this series. Once the odor was that of tobacco, it has repeatedly been that of putrefaction; once — under a recent date — it was a marked fragrance like that of tube-roses. The recognition of banana as being included in a beverage is probably to be regarded as an olfactory rather than a taste judgment. But the taste of this same drink was described as sweet, a true gustatory quality. (Dreams of eating seem generally to lack the experience of smelling and tasting which should belong to them.) Pain has not clearly appeared in the dreams of the subject. In the next chapter we shall see how it is dramatized.

Hearing, in the experience of our compiler, has peculiar aspects. His dreams have for the most part been silent. This in spite of the fact that conversations are described. It is his impression that, when he speaks in a dream, it is the motor part of the performance which he realizes. He knows what the other party in

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the dialogue means to say to him, but this is by intuition rather than by hearing. Such intuition is not very striking when it is considered that there is only one dreamer after all. There is again and again the substitution of written or printed communications for speech. The visual mechanisms of the nervous system seem to be much more active than the auditory, and they are employed to a corresponding extent.

Nevertheless sounds do figure in dreams. Choral and orchestral music has been heard with keen pleasure. Other sounds have entered dreams at the moment of waking. They have been realistic and have been accepted after waking as having objective origin. In some cases this has been verified. Once the dreamer was sleeping with his little boy, who had a severe cold. The subject thought that he tried to cross a street covered by deep snow. He moved with increasing difficulty until he reached the car-track, and at that point he became unable to take another step. A red electric car bore down upon him, the motor-man insistently ringing his gong. The sleeper

## DREAMS

woke and found the boy coughing hard in the rhythm of the gong. Here we have illustrated two points recently made, that failure of muscular command attends emergence from sleep, and also the acceptance of a sound as reality.

In another dream a small picture was to be hung on the wall. A screw-eye had to be provided for this purpose, and, as it was jerkily turned, it made a succession of rasping sounds. These were immediately found to proceed from a locomotive which was puffing out of the neighboring station. Once more the dreamer thought that he was sitting sadly in the room next to one in which his aunt lay dying. He could hear her breathing and after a little she began to repeat a name: "Carl — Carl — Carl!" It turned out that this was a quite faithful reproduction of the snoring of a large cat which lay on the bed.

A dream which is unique in this collection and which has interesting sensory elements was recorded in 1898. The subject was fully convinced that he had waked up when in fact he had not. He was enjoying a summer vacation in a country hotel in Vermont. One morning,



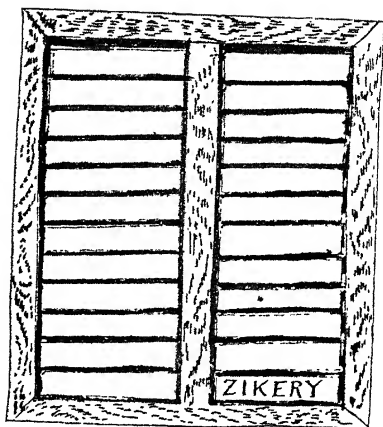
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as he believed, he experienced the typical return to consciousness, but found himself to his utter dismay out in the corridor. He was stretched upon the floor; he felt the general coolness of the air and in particular the chill of the matting against his bare legs. It seemed to him that his mind was quite alert. He was aware that he did not have his glasses and was handicapped by his nearsightedness. He argued that he had never been known to walk in his sleep but he could not deny that he had now been doing so.

A dim twilight prevailed in the hall. He saw the doors of several rooms and noted that the one nearest him was ajar. It did not seem exactly to correspond with that of his own room, but he felt that it might be that. Some move must be made, and he purposed to steal over there. Just at this moment of acute anxiety the second and bona-fide waking took place. It was delightful to realize that the victim of this torturing dream was really safe in his bed. Yet the previous transition from sleep to apparent wakefulness had been more convincing.

Returning now to the matter of visualizing





THE KITCHEN BULLETIN

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in dreams, it may be opportune to say something of the surprisingly frequent fixation of the attention by words and numbers. The list of coined words ("neologisms," as they have been called) is of some length. Even longer is the record of numbers which have presented themselves. Here is a specimen dream in which a new word was so placed as to compel consideration. The dreamer strolled into his kitchen and discovered on the wall behind the stove an appliance which he had not seen there before. Within an oak frame there were two vertical columns of reversible wooden slats, about twenty in all. The arrangement was much like the devices used to describe the routes of trains.

In the present case all the slats showed unmarked black surfaces until the lowest one in the right-hand column was reached. Here in white letters appeared the strange word *Zikery*. The dreamer supposed that the slats were to be used in making memoranda of articles to be ordered from the grocer. *Zikery* might well be some sort of breakfast food. But he did not feel a great deal of confidence in his guess. If

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the order of the names on the slats was an alphabetical one, then the position of the solitary *Zikery* was appropriately at the end of the list.

*Coelo* the dreamer understood to be the name of a town in New Jersey. He saw its deserted streets with rows of electric lights, as he was borne swiftly through on a night train bound from Philadelphia to New York. Again he went on a journey and evinced a curiosity concerning the names of places on the road. At one station he was baffled; he could not see the sign anywhere. But at the next city, a considerable one, he spotted the name *Eilare*. The pronunciation of this word evidently admitted of different opinions, and before he woke up he settled the matter once and for all. It is as if spelled Eylair. He thought it a pleasing name and was complacent over his invention.

In waking life we often misread words and phrases. Something of the kind may happen in dreams. Once the subject made note of what he assumed to be the name of a newspaper; he made it out to be *The Bottom Oaks*. This did not seem entirely felicitous. But if

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*The Boston Post* was the underlying title, one can well recognize the possibility of garbling it to this extent. The number of the letters is right and most of the individual ones also. The errors are just such as one makes at the oculist's when trying to read the limiting line on his test-card.

The strange words emerging in dreams have not always been seen, as in the instances just given, but sometimes they have appeared in conversation. Thus in 1918 the dreamer once heard certain persons volubly discussing this question: "Is the *Gennard* approaching or receding?" It was his notion at the time that this was some astronomical event like an occultation or a conjunction. Freudian eyes brighten as they detect the root of GENeration in the otherwise colorless word.

Once a word was read which had been given a Latin superlative form — "*Hortonissimus*." It was the name of a tune in the hymn book from which the dreamer was singing. There is a tune called "*Horton*." The melody in this case was recalled, not as that of "*Horton*" but as that of "*Aletta*." The word attracted the

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attention of the subject sufficiently to interest him in its derivation and he concluded — while still asleep — that it meant “most cultivated” (Hortus, a garden). The use of the suffix deserves to be mentioned because it is a rather subtle and unusual type of the exaggeration or striving for sensational effect which we are continually discovering.

Two unfamiliar verbs were brought to the attention of the dreamer in a more recent passage. He was listening to the fluent and energetic discourse of another man who was talking politics. “We must not *Taft* or *Charlemont* our legislation,” affirmed the speaker. This was perfectly intelligible to the hearer. He understood that to *Taft* was to make mild, a reference to the assumed character of the genial Chief Justice. He perceived that the verb *Cha. lemont* had in it the stem CHAR and ought to mean injure or impair. (Charlemont is in fact a lovely town in the Deerfield Valley.)

Reference has been made to the phenomenon of mutation sometimes observed in dream pictures. A corresponding shading from one form to another may be found to affect words in the

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mind of the dreamer. The scribe was once present at a prayer meeting held by the negro students of a great industrial school like Tuskegee or Hampton. The leader spoke feelingly of the death of General Hull. Then he suggested that it might be a question whether he had gone to heaven or — not. *Hull* presumably modulated into *Hell* by a process just under the surface of consciousness. Once more, in the course of an imaginary railway trip there was some mention of *Bridgewater* and this was promptly followed by the recognition of *Brigh-ton* outside the car window. The two names have three introductory letters in common.

Rhyming is evidently not far removed from this shading from one word into another. The wife of the dreamer made a slight adjustment of his clothing and said to someone near by: "You see, Mr. Dutton, every day we button better and better." The date of this dream coincided with M. Coué's vogue. The derivation of button from Dutton is plain; button in its turn prepares the way for "better."

In this case rhyme influenced the story, but there was no striving for metre. But in at



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least two dreams definite versification has been attempted. The results are not meritorious but ought to be set down.

Now, you've kept me wide awake  
Underlining chocolate cake.

There is a reminiscence in the rhythm of "Now I lay me down to sleep." Here is another:

Sunday morning, half-past nine,—  
House Peters, dressed in clothes so fine,  
Hung those clothes upon the line:  
Sunday morning, half-past nine.

The odd name of House Peters had been conspicuous over the entrances of local movies that week. The stanza is inconsequent and marked by poverty of invention as shown by the repetition of line one.

The chronicle contains at least eighteen references to particular numbers. Fifteen of these are fives or multiples of five. A nightshirt bore the price mark \$17.85. This number was seemingly arrived at by setting down 17 and then multiplying it by five. The high price is an example of the general tendency to magnify quantities. So is the charge of \$1.50 for stewed tomatoes noted in one of the restaurants of

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Dreamland. A stranger closed an interview which the dreamer had found agreeable by saying: "Call me up some time, Africa 794." A remote exchange and a large one!

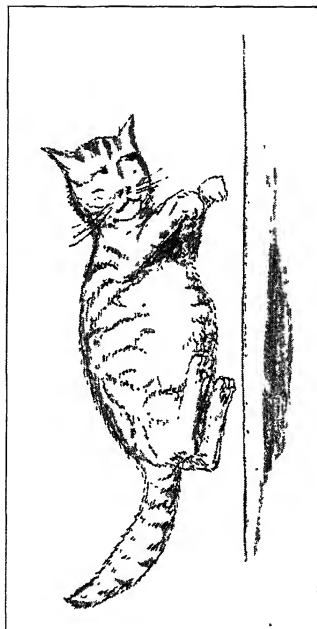
In the summer of 1904 the writer visited a remarkably large and handsome spring near Savannah. He talked with a native about the fine flow of water, "Enough to fill a six-inch pipe." "Yes," said the Georgian, "a manufacturer in Chicago intends to pipe it there. It would furnish one thirteenth of the power needed in his factory." A very long bow ap-pears to have been drawn and then a modest estimate (one thirteenth) is skilfully used to make the whole more acceptable.

### III

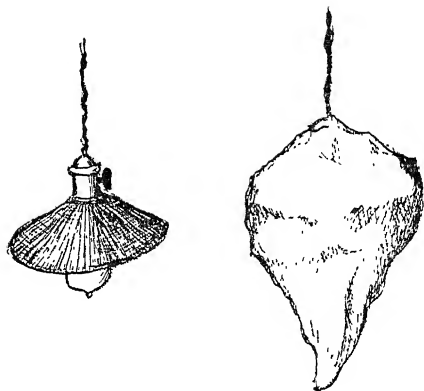
#### *Bodily States and Dreams*

HAVELOCK ELLIS has termed presentative those dreams which appear to be the result of conditions affecting the sleeper at the time of the experience. Since the conditions in question may be either bodily or external, he has subdivided this class into "somatic presentative" and "external presentative" dreams. The dreams occasioned by sounds, to which reference has just been made, evidently belong in the latter group. The collection is particularly rich in examples of the somatic type.

As we deal with them, it will be helpful always to bear in mind, as Ellis has shown, that the dreaming mind usually *illustrates* instead of *feeling*. Instead of realizing pain the subject substitutes for it some disturbing sight. An oddly inflated cat was seen by the dreamer, at first with amusement but presently



INFLATION



AN OVERBURDENED SYSTEM

## DREAMS

with disquiet. The animal was tossed up from the floor in a series of little rebounds such as a football might have shown. What was at first taken to be playfulness was shortly recognized to indicate distress. Waking, the recorder found that his own abdominal walls were uncomfortably tense; he had a prosaic stomach-ache. Here we may note a second principle of dream psychology — exaggeration. The actual discomfort was moderate, but it had been dramatized as mortal agony. Several times the act of vomiting has been witnessed, but there has been no consciousness of nausea when the dreamer has been aroused. In all probability there was some slight qualm to originate the idea.

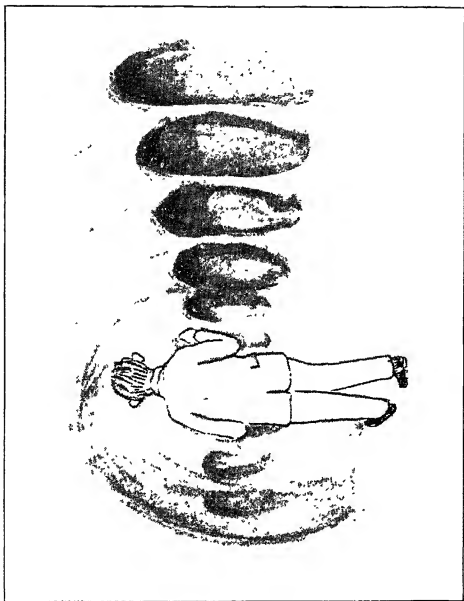
An overburdened alimentary tract was once pictured as follows. There had been immoderate indulgence in buttered pop-corn. In the dream the various rooms of the house were found disfigured by deposits of grease. A striking detail remembered was an electric light which with its shade was completely enveloped in a mass of what appeared to be lard. The substance depended after the manner of a

## DREAMS

stalactite. There was no distinct sense of repletion upon awaking.

Intestinal activity is appropriately figured as progress along passageways. On one occasion where this motif was stressed, the dreamer strolled thoughtlessly into a subway and then realized that he would have to hurry to the next station to avoid being overtaken by a car. He accomplished this without being closely pursued, but he was very apprehensive. Once more he crawled on hands and knees through a low culvert under a railroad track, recrossed the roadbed, and laboriously repeated the trip a number of times.

One dream of probable peristaltic causation deserves to be related in some detail. The dreamer found himself in the chapel of the Old South Church where a meeting was going on. Doctor Gordon shortly made the announcement: "We will unite in prayer for fifty minutes." The reaction of the subject was strong and undisguised. "That is too long," he said to himself, and he rose and left the room. But he did not find his way to the street; he wandered through strange apartments. Once he



THE COLON





## DREAMS

crossed a square room which he believed to be a stage in the tower. He saw gas-jets burning feebly at a few points. Twice he passed lavatories. He saw stolid watchmen who ignored him. He entered a long, low gallery with a series of dark recesses in its right-hand wall. He thought that he was now within the cornice of the church and that these hollows corresponded with ornamental projections on the outside.

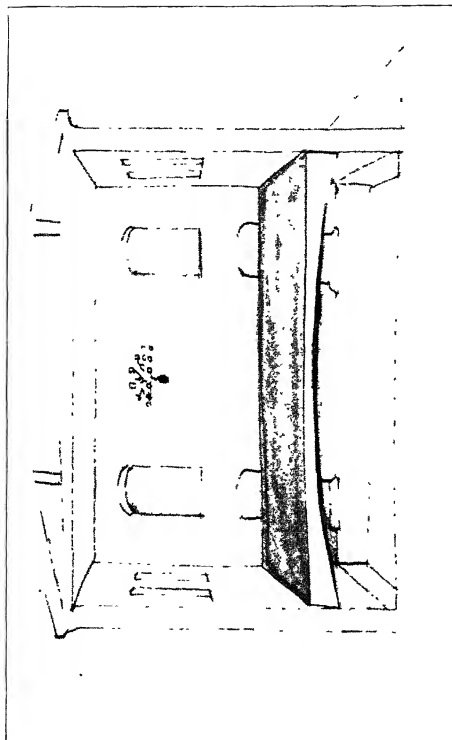
At last he met three smiling policemen and appealed to them for guidance. They conducted him, not to the sidewalk, but to the main audience room. This was found to be greatly altered from its actual arrangement. The windows were of plain glass. There were seats for a large chorus — two hundred he judged — but no organ was visible. (This was disappointing for he deeply admired the Old South organ.) Singers to the number of about fifty now rose, and he waited expectantly. Heavy and muffled organ tones began to be heard, seemingly from beneath the floor. He woke.

It is curious to observe how many items can

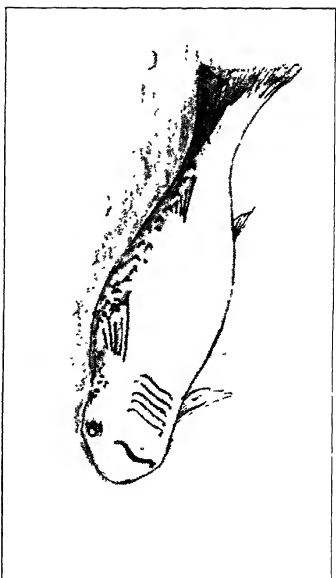
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be readily associated with intestinal unrest. An anxious mood, the threading of winding ways, the gas-jets, the lavatories, the hollow cornice which is derived from the sacculated colon, the rumbling notes proceeding from an invisible source—all these are pertinent to the theme. But there was the accustomed magnification of existing conditions: there was no realization of urgency when consciousness returned.

Breathing is a function which is often influential in the shaping of dreams. Its rhythm may at any time make its appearance. Once a movable floor was viewed with curiosity. It was about forty feet long and twenty feet in width. It was in the lobby of a large concert hall. This floor could be brought to the level of the entrances from the street and many people could take their places upon it. It would then be raised to the second story and discharge its passengers to the hall. It was, in short, a great elevator, but without sides, in consequence of which the doorways were unguarded when the floor shifted its position. Was it not an image of the diaphragm monoto-



THE DIAPHRAGM



BREATHLESS

## DREAMS

nously rising and falling? It may have been so, but no explanation is afforded of the fact that the moving floor was covered by a thick green carpet.

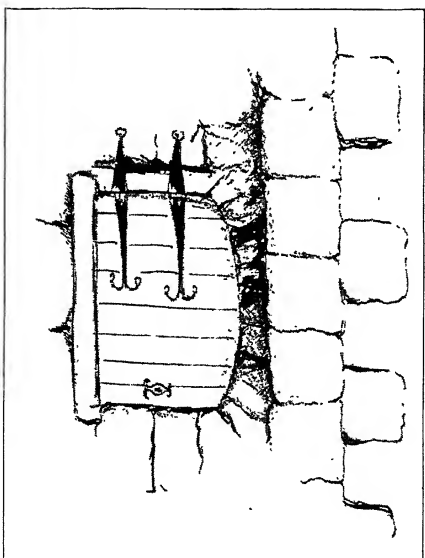
Obstructed respiration is probably a fruitful source of nightmares. The following dream did not have the element of horror but was easy to interpret. A small fish of somewhat unusual appearance was seen lying dead upon a gravel drive-way. It was greenish yellow. Instead of having gill-slits on both sides, it had a single row of them ventrally placed. When he woke, the dreamer found that his nose was stopped. He could not breathe — neither could the “poor fish.” The coloration was suggestive of the nasal secretion.

Once his attention became fixed by a door of ancient and massive construction which was in the wall of a castle. It was high up—in fact, just below the battlement. The iron hinges were large and elaborately designed. The door seemed to communicate a mood or atmosphere; it was one of oppression and helpless confinement. When awake, the subject found that he was suffering from a severe headache, an un-

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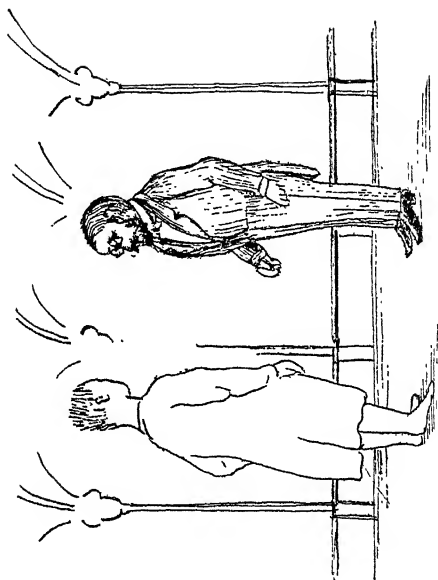
wonted experience for him. The pain was definitely localized at the base of the skull, where the configuration was remarkably like that of the castle wall with the overhanging battlement. People often describe headaches as being like the pressure of bands of iron, and the suggestion is apparent in the long hinges of the door.

Dryness of the throat—often as a result of mouth breathing—is probably responsible for certain dreams of thirst and drinking. Our subject once felt that he must have a drink of water and found that he would have to take it from a dust-pan. He set his teeth firmly upon the edge of the pan and then tilted his head backward until the water ran into his mouth. It did not spill on either side as he had thought that it would. He felt much relieved by the copious and satisfying drink. The dust-pan may have been chosen here because the existing dryness of the membranes suggested a dusty surface. It seemed to the dreamer that there was another contributing influence. The day before he had seen in the paper the picture of a champion harmonica player. He had



HEADACHE





A QUESTION OF ETIQUETTE

## DREAMS

noted that the mouth was long and straight. The lips would set in just such lines in playing the harmonica, and even more strikingly in being applied to the edge of the homely utensil which did duty as a drinking vessel.

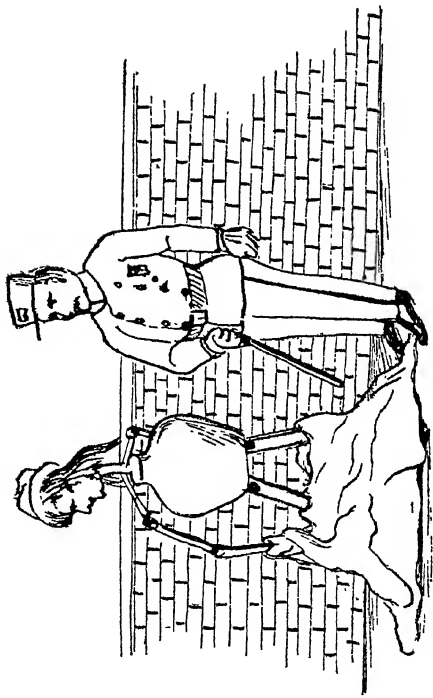
Everyone has had the dreaming adventure of mingling with company when most scantily clothed. Here is a piquant instance. The dreamer was strolling along a hotel corridor, an ornate and brightly lighted place where there was much coming and going. He did not at first mind the circumstance that he wore only a night-shirt. But his complacency was short-lived. An immaculate stranger stopped for a moment to survey him and then said scathingly, "Well, I suppose you may call that evening dress." Extreme embarrassment resulted and the scribe retreated to his room. Such dreams may be attributed to a lack of covering, or there may be a more subtle and figurative significance.

Here is a dream which probably derives its imagery from a full bladder. The scene was a shabby street believed to be in the West End of Boston. The witness saw three or four

## DREAMS

policemen walking rapidly and peering around as though following a trail. He himself looked about for suspicious characters. He did not see any such, only a plain woman trudging along the opposite sidewalk. One of the policemen overtook her and without warning began to strike her with his heavy club. The dreamer was mildly startled by the vicious attack; then he was more surprised by the indifference of the victim. She took several steps before a telling blow made her swerve against a brick wall and stand still.

Under a continuation of the beating, her clothes fell to the ground and the mystery was cleared up. The "woman" was an automaton contrived to move on two legs but having a large glass carboy for a body. The inference was drawn that this contained liquor. The ingenuity of the device for this illicit traffic impressed the looker-on considerably. So did the vigilance of the officers who had detected it. Here may be noticed the usual propensity of the dreaming mind to exaggerate or magnify. The carboy was so large that it was the main part of the effigy. The corollary is that the



THE ANIMATED CARBOY



## DREAMS

body of the sleeper was regarded at the moment as "all bladder."

It is expected that dreams originated by bladder tension will prove to be common. This is abundantly verified. At one time the dreamer thought that he turned on a faucet over a tub in the laundry but failed to obtain a flow of water. This is a neat presentation of a need and an inhibition of its satisfaction. Water and containers for it naturally figure in dreams of this class. Often the mood attending is one of anxiety and concentration on the avoidance of a mishap.

The influence of sex interest is recognized in many of the dreams recorded. It is sometimes perceived on rereading a story which had previously seemed to contain no hint of it. It is often deduced by a discerning student of the manuscript when it had not been detected by the chronicler himself. But while every effort has been made to keep an open mind and to accept disagreeable implications with frankness, the writer is not yet ready to declare with Freud that sex is a motivating factor in all or even the majority of dreams. Of course

## DREAMS

he speaks from an individual standpoint; he does not presume to contend with a great school when he has the dreams of but one man as a resource.

It is not easy to be fair to the Freudians. The temptation is strong to caricature their principles and to say that their rule is to put the worst possible construction on all they can find out about the patient. If his dreams are evil, they are accepted at their face value; while, if they are innocent, they are held to conceal guilt. Certain pessimistic passages from Scripture occur to one as adapted for use on Freudian title-pages: "There is none righteous, no, not one" (Romans III, 10). "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags" (Isaiah LXIV, 6). But a reaction like this is hasty and extreme.

Even an amateur like the present writer may come to appreciate that there is more to the Freudian doctrine than mere muck-raking. Decent living is a somewhat recent attainment of the race, and recent attainments are insecure possessions. The normal man has come to regulate his conduct by the exercise of self-

## DREAMS

discipline. It is unjust to call him a hypocrite because he has impulses which he constantly resists. Even Paul said, "When I would do good, evil is present with me" (Romans VII, 21). The saints of the first century appear to have been closer to the Freudians than some modern disciples who maintain that a state of sanctification is possible in which no regressive tendencies shall exist. Would not such a condition be one of moral stagnation, and definitely less noble than one in which conflict is an acknowledged fact?

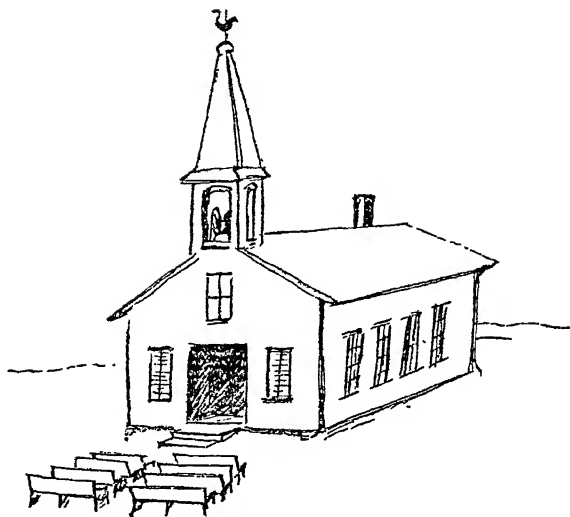
If primitive tendencies do exist and are counterbalanced in waking hours by the best elements of character, why should they not be manifested when sleep has removed the restraint? Among these impulses are of course those of sex. They are not to be regarded as base, but their control is essential to the altruistic and social life. Many sex dreams are undisguised and gross. In others the inveterate habit of employing allegory finds illustrations. A single example may be transcribed.

The dreamer saw a church, a common type of New England meeting-house standing in a



## DREAMS

green enclosure. He decided that the denomination was Baptist. The single door of the building stood open and not far from it on the grass were several pews. He understood at the time that these could be occupied by worshippers not finding room within. They could perhaps look down the aisle to the chancel and catch something of the service. (He recalls a Civil War picture in which General Grant and his staff are seated in pews removed from a Virginia church.) On reflection he inferred that this was a sex dream featuring the fact of restraint. The fundamental idea is that of remaining outside.



CONTINENCE



## IV

### *Memories and Anticipations in Dreams*

MEMORY dreams are the “representative” dreams of Ellis. They have been distinguished by him as either recent or remote. The term recent is usually reserved for those dreams which carry into sleep the problems which the subject had most on his mind when going to bed. They are the prevailing type when one is over-tired or worried. Under wholesome conditions most memory dreams are of the remote sort, bringing to the fore places and persons not lately recalled so far as one can tell. Items may appear which have to be referred to a very distant past.

The writer once dreamed of a house which he had been accustomed to visit during the summer vacations of his boyhood. In the dream he went down into the cellar of this house, and while there he heard a peculiar

## DREAMS

humming sound made by the water in the pipes. He felt sure, when he thought it over, that he had really gone into that cellar and heard the noise as a child. Memory corroborated the dream. The interval had been about thirty years and the utility of retaining the impression is puzzling.

In another dream there was a striking revival of a memory image associated with the boyhood home. The passage began with the ringing of a door-bell. The writer thought that he must answer the summons and he went down a flight of stairs. It was only when he reached the lower hall that he realized that he was not in his own house but in that of his father, where he had not lived for more than twenty years. Instead of answering the bell, he now went into the old familiar sitting-room and with sudden caution approached the double doors leading to the front parlor. There was a portière at this point. He reached past the right-hand door-post and snapped an electric switch, flooding the parlor with light.

It was at this moment that the old memory flashed. There before his eyes was the Brussels

## DREAMS

carpet of other days. Its monstrous figures, adapted to a kind of medallion setting with units a yard wide, were seen once more. Nothing at all like it had been a part of recent experience. In fact, the carpet had been banished from the paternal home long before the son went forth to marry and found his own establishment.

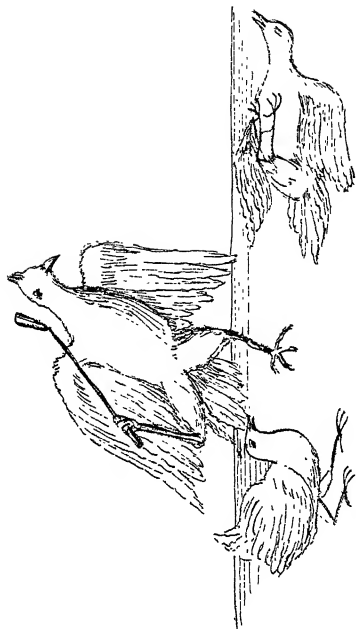
A very recent (1927) dream appears to have a backward reach of fully forty years. In it the dreamer saw the breaking out of a fire in a large hotel. It was night. The flames spread swiftly and people entrapped began jumping from the upper stories. Certain ones struck the roof of a piazza and other projections from the walls. Maimed or killed, they collapsed in odd positions. The scene was very dreadful. It was recalled as having for its basis a picture of a similar horror which was in Harper's or Leslie's weekly in the eighteen-eighties.

Most dreams are mosaics of memories, and often the elements are assembled from many different periods. But there are a few available illustrations of memory dreams based upon very specific occasions. The following will

## DREAMS

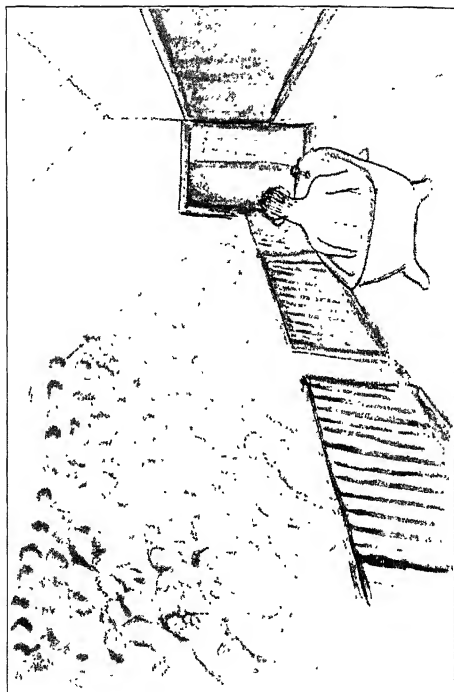
hardly be questioned. The attention of the dreamer was attracted by the movements of a large and handsome bird. It was strutting about on a shining surface. A very small bird ran before the large one, which instantly whipped a miniature golf-club from beneath its wing and with it stunned or killed the little fellow by a single blow. In a moment a second small bird blundered too close to the bully and was served in the same outrageous manner.

The recorder had formed no theory to account for the events he had witnessed when he came to make a sketch of the situation. Then the meaning became suddenly clear. Only two days before the date of the dream he had submitted to the extraction of two teeth. It had been a novocaine operation and quite painless, but still attended by a certain grim concentration. The two little birds which received such summary treatment stood for the two teeth. The gesture of the formidable assailant as the golf-club was brought into play accurately reproduced the onslaught of the dentist. A sinister gleam of steel identified the club with the forceps.



A DOUBLE TRAGEDY





HUMILIATED

## DREAMS

There is in this dream an undercurrent of self-pity. In some other cases of dreams based on memories there has been the harshest self-ridicule. The following is an extreme example. The dreamer found himself taking a bath. The tub had replaced the table of the lecturer in a large amphitheatre supposed to be one of those at the Harvard Medical School. A glare of white light beat mercilessly upon the tub and its occupant. He could not distinctly see the outlying parts of the room, but he made out that the seats were filled with spectators, silent and motionless. He hoped desperately that they were all asleep.

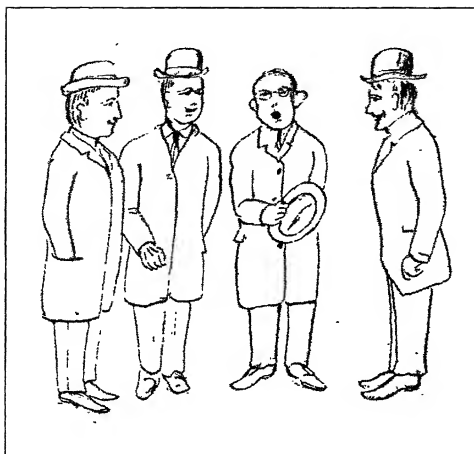
He was not long in doubt as to the basis of this disconcerting experience. Shortly before, he had taken part in a Christmas pageant. He had ponderously carried out the moves dictated to him in the brightly lighted chancel of a church. Then, as in the dream, the crowded ranks of the congregation had been dimly seen in relative darkness. He had felt that he made a fool of himself. And so in the dream he had surpassed his previous performance — he had made as much of a fool of himself as possible.

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The action is exaggerated but the feeling remains at about its original pitch; that is to say, he minded bathing in public just about as much as he had minded appearing in the spectacle.

In the next dream the derisory attitude is again assumed, though it has not been possible to trace it to a concrete source in real life. The dreamer was one of four men in a drug-store. Something had been said or done to cast doubt upon the Americanism of this quartette and they had been boldly upbraided by a young woman who was on duty behind the counter. She charged them with revolutionary intentions. "We must square ourselves," said the narrator, honestly impressed and humbled by the reproaches. So he began to sing "My Country, 't is of Thee." He supposed that his three friends were uniting with him; just as he was about to begin the third stanza with the utmost fervor, he realized that they were keeping still and grinning at his efforts. He was thoroughly abashed.

It is a fact that the collector of these dreams likes to sing. It is also a fact that his singing



AN ARDENT SOLOIST



## DREAMS

is nothing to boast of. The nub of the dream seems to be a bit of introspection in the spirit of the taunt — “You think you can sing, don’t you?” It must be added that complacency rather than self-depreciation prevails through most of the dream passages.

Something remembered from one’s experience may be a challenge to the inventive capacities of the dreaming mind which proceeds to improve on the original matter. The dreamer had seen a moving-picture show in which the picture of a murderer became imprinted on the eye of the dead. It became the means of identification and capture. An attempt was promptly made to compose a better story. The writer found himself charged with the duty of investigating the murder of a colleague. He was being assisted by a younger man. His helper went into a low attic and presently called back that the mystery was solved. The dreamer went to the spot and both men stooped to examine closely a brass-headed tack in the dirty floor. On this disc, small though it was, they could see two recognizable portraits of the offender. It is a curious detail that one of

## DREAMS

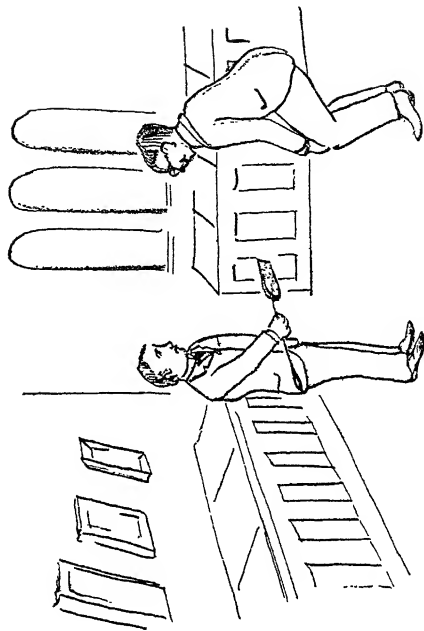
these tiny pictures was full face and the other a profile, as in the Rogues' Gallery.

The personality fabricating a dream like this is indulging its vanity. There is a jaunty facility about the creative flight and there is little disguising of the spirit in which the work is done. "See how easily I have outclassed the fellow who made the movie! I guess I am some punkins!" The impression of buoyant conceit is not to be escaped.

A nearly parallel case, in which there was ill-natured and unbecoming ridicule of a literary work, may be given. The egotism involved is greater than that which poked fun at the rather threadbare device of the picture in the eye. Here a noble theme is mocked, that of renunciation. The sources of the dream are probably to be assigned to "Les Miserables." The dreamer followed the fortunes of a character who was as magnanimous and self-sacrificing as the Bishop, or Jean Valjean in his maturity. This man had a full black beard of a rabbinical type. He looked with compassion upon a comrade who had little or no adornment of this nature, and after a brief struggle







VAINGLORIOUS MALICE

## DREAMS

achieved a moral victory and gave away his own precious beard.

Fantine's sale of her hair is recalled. But how the touching episode is perverted and caricatured! The one motive of the procedure is to excel the novelist. If it cannot be within bounds of taste and reason, it must be without. And there is a broad sneer at the splendid idealism of the romance.

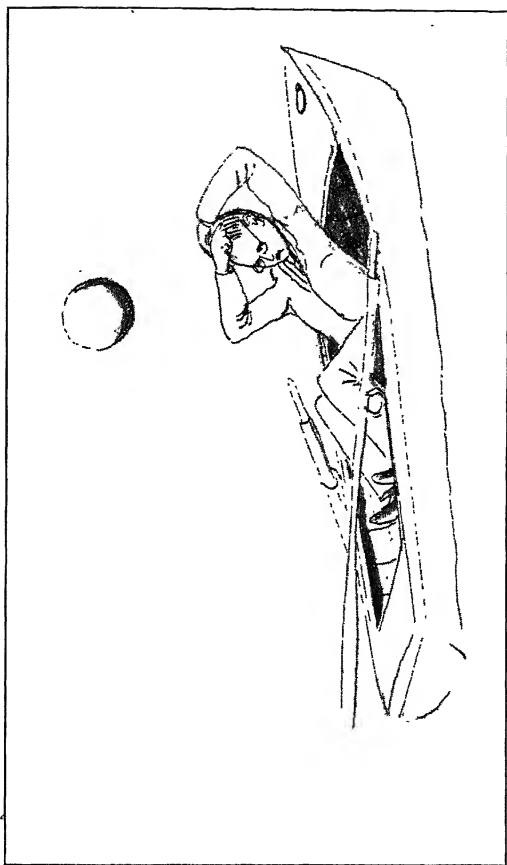
Another dream which has points of resemblance to the last may be introduced at this place, though its memory origins are not at all certain. The dreamer found himself in the old Museum of Fine Arts which was in Copley Square, Boston. This building had been abandoned at least five years before the date of the dream. He was in company with G——, one of his oldest and best friends. It struck him as very amusing that his companion should be carrying a fire-shovel. It seemed an extreme case of absent-mindedness for one to come from home to the city and forget to leave the implement. The next thought which came to the dreamer redoubled his risibility. He considered that G—— would surely be stopped

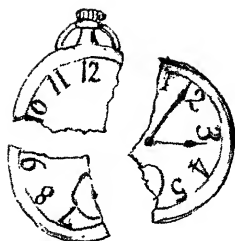
## DREAMS

when he should try to leave the Museum. He would be accused of having stolen the shovel from among its treasures.

It has been shown that one may ridicule oneself in a dream, but that it is more common for one to exalt oneself and make fun of the accomplishments of others. The dream of the fire-shovel shows the dreamer at his worst. Moved by his inordinate desire to glorify himself, he has belittled a friend to whom he owed all possible loyalty and consideration. The unspoken commentary on the absent-minded man is to this effect: "Poor simp, I would never have been so dumb as to act as you have." He has never been more ashamed of any dream than of this one with its petty and malicious derogation of a faithful friend.

It has not been found that this collection is very rich in memory dreams. It is perhaps rather better stocked with dreams of an anticipatory sort. In many of these there are apprehensive notes. This is an elementary illustration dating from hall-bedroom days in New York back in 1902. The bed was of the folding variety. The exiled Bostonian had piled the





A SERIOUS MISHAP

## DREAMS

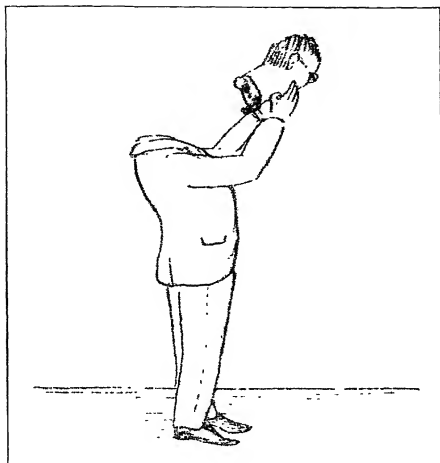
top of it with his books, thinking meanwhile that there would be a rude awakening if any of these should fall on him in the night. There seems not to have been any accident of this kind, but the fear was promptly presented in a dream. He seemed to be drifting contentedly in an open boat upon a smiling blue sea. He thought that he was near Newport. About a mile away in a northerly direction there was a low sandy shore, from which at intervals there shot up gushes of white smoke. He thought that a mortar battery was in practice. He could hear the heavy reports and he discovered that he could follow the flight of the shells. It was not long before one came in his direction. He had just time to make out that it was an old-fashioned spherical affair when it landed on his head and he woke.

As often before, we see the tendency to exaggerate a happening. A book dropping three feet is represented with prodigious hyperbole as a death-dealing bomb falling half a mile. Compare this with the following. The dreamer was distressed to find his watch completely broken into three parts. Bits of the internal

## DREAMS

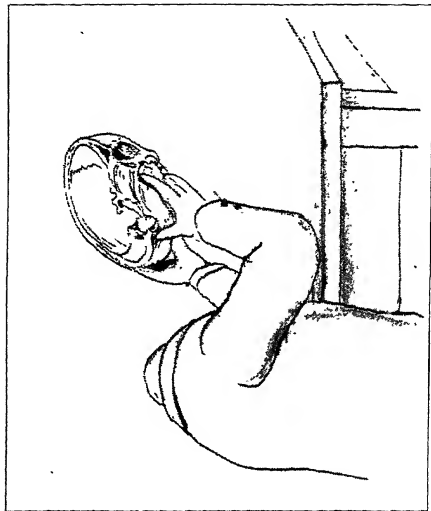
mechanism were scattered about the floor. Now, as a matter of fact, the *crystal* of his watch was cracked along these radial lines. But this was too tame for the sensational tastes of the dreaming mind; it was necessary to break up the whole watch, to make a worthwhile news item.

Memory and apprehension are both recognizable in the dream of the infected thyroid. The dreamer had a carbuncle in June, 1904, and naturally feared for several weeks that there might be some recurrence. It was during this period that he thought he took off his head and inspected the severed neck from below to check up on the healing process. Appearances were not reassuring. There was an ugly cavity with gangrenous borders. Even as he realized this ominous condition, he had an additional shock: the thyroid gland detached itself and fell upon the floor. Here was a dilemma, and it was appreciated with more acumen than has been usual in the dreams of this series. If the organ were left out, serious disturbances might be expected. If it were put back, an infection would be pretty certain to



THE PROBLEM OF THE THYROID





A POSTMORTEM STUDY

## DREAMS

be carried with it. The decision as to what course to pursue was never reached, for the subject woke up.

It is natural to recount along with this dream another which was recorded in 1907. The dreamer availed himself of the unusual if gruesome privilege of examining his own dried and empty skull. It had been sawed through in the middle plane, so that the space formerly occupied by the brain was wide open. This proved to be one of those exceptional dreams in which there is dissatisfaction with oneself. It was noted that the brain had always had restricted quarters. Over a large area the walls of the skull were two or three times as thick as they should have been. The space enclosed was correspondingly smaller than would have been expected. One of the halves still contained a tumor resembling an onion, which had not been removed with the other soft tissues. The observation of this abnormal head-piece was attended by feelings of lively contempt.

The dreamer has a yellow cat of which he is very fond. In the fall of 1922 the pet animal disappeared and was missing for four days.

## DREAMS

It finally returned in good condition. While it was gone, the several members of the family mourned for it as dead and the deepest gloom pervaded the home. In the course of one night the writer dreamed that the cat jumped upon his bed. The reasoning which followed was in some respects unusual and the narrative has a certain pathos. In the first place, the subject knew that he was dreaming. He felt that if he woke up without special precautions he would lose the cat. But, he thought, if he should hold his pet firmly and never relax his grasp while emerging from sleep, he could keep it through the crisis and still possess it in waking life.

So, according to the dream, he held the cat fast in his arms and began to make a voluntary progress toward "the light of common day." The transit seemed long. Again and again he was heartened by the assurance that the cat was still substantial. "Not gone yet and I am almost awake!" he congratulated himself. It was only at the very last moment that the cruel disappointment came, the sudden knowledge that his plan had failed and that he was once more bereft.

## V

### *The Emotional Content of Dreams*

MOST people will agree that the emotional experiences of dreaming are sometimes more vivid and sometimes less so than the circumstances would seem to warrant. Sometimes one is callous and unmoved in the presence of most tragic occurrences. Again, one is nearly overcome by a surge of feeling as he views a situation that is entirely commonplace when described. The Freudians are probably right in their explanation of such apparent inconsistencies. The emotion of the dreamer pertains to the deeper current in his thinking to which the dream itself is only indirectly related. An intensely agitating idea may underlie an apparently trivial dream and surcharge it with terror or loathing. It is a matter for regret that we cannot often guess at the concealed motivation.

Wholly pleasurable emotions have not been

## DREAMS

very frequent. They have on a few occasions been associated with the hearing of music. Away back in 1897 the dreamer experienced exquisite joy as he listened to the accompaniment of "Comfort ye my People" (*The Messiah*), delicately rendered by a few instruments from among those in a great band. It is recorded that, when he woke, he endeavored to go back to sleep and hear more, but could not. It was in 1919 that he was profoundly stirred by a chorus singing "On Thee each living Soul awaits" (*The Creation*). The singers were out of doors, he was in the kitchen. They were evidently coming nearer, and the crescendo effect of their approach thrilled him intensely. He thought that he rushed into the yard clapping his hands.

Emotion blending exhilaration and delight has marked a number of dreams in which natural scenery has been admired. Mountains and the ocean have a mighty appeal for the subject at any time, and it would be strange if they did not figure in his dreams. He has found himself on shipboard repeatedly, and always full of happy anticipations of the voyage. He

## DREAMS

has rejoiced to see the waves on the increase and has recklessly wished that they would swell to grander proportions. Almost always he has been disappointed in his adventurous ardor; the ship has returned to the quiet of the dock.

His dreams of the mountains have been marked by extreme ease of movement and the keenest sense of the beautiful. He has not indulged in these particular dreams in the usual magnification of scale; he has not made Mount Washington into Mount Everest, and he has found Crawford Notch quite satisfying with its ordinary dimensions. In a recent dream he was much gratified to look at a fine photograph of Ripley Falls, a charming feature of the latter region. He had never been able to figure how such a picture could be taken, but the topography of the valley was readily changed in the dream to provide an effective point of view.

A feeling of amusement has been noted from time to time. It may be joined with a sense of superiority, as in the discreditable dream of the fire-shovel. It has sometimes seemed to express a kindlier mood. There is in the record

## DREAMS

a dream (1921) in which the writer was going to call on an old friend whom he had not seen for several years. As he came near the house he saw a sign beside the road and read: "*Yes, I am at home.* HERB." He felt a lively pleasure and his comment was much like this: "That is just like good old Herb, genial and whimsical, as he always used to be."

The strongest and most disagreeable emotions are often linked with situations in which there is a mystifying element. This may be illustrated by the "Dream of the Enchanted Walking-stick." The recorder was tramping about the streets of Boston at a time when they seemed quite deserted though it was daylight. Probably it was an early summer morning. As he passed a sombre block of old houses he heard a slow rhythmic tapping sound. It seemed to come from within a neighboring door, and this he was impelled to throw open. A dingy entry was revealed. From it rose a flight of wooden stairs, and on one of the upper steps there stood — upright — a simple walking-stick. While the observer watched it with deepening horror, it rose, moved forward, and



A STARTLING PHENOMENON





## DREAMS

descended with a sharp rap upon the next step below, precisely as if borne by an invisible hand. He thought that he fell to the ground overcome by the intensity of his feeling. It was just the accepted registration of emotion which the comic strips have made familiar.

In the earliest period of this collection, and probably before, if memory can be trusted, there was an emotional dream which recurred with minor variations. It was always profoundly disturbing, though it may be difficult to justify this fact as the dream is related. The invariable feature was the discovery of an unknown room somewhere within the walls of the boyhood home. Unexpected access to this apartment was had from various places, usually from the attic or "the shed." It was always entered with extreme apprehension. The strange room was in a dilapidated condition and gave at first the impression of complete disuse. But the haunting conviction grew upon the discoverer that *something* of a secret and sinister character had just happened there.

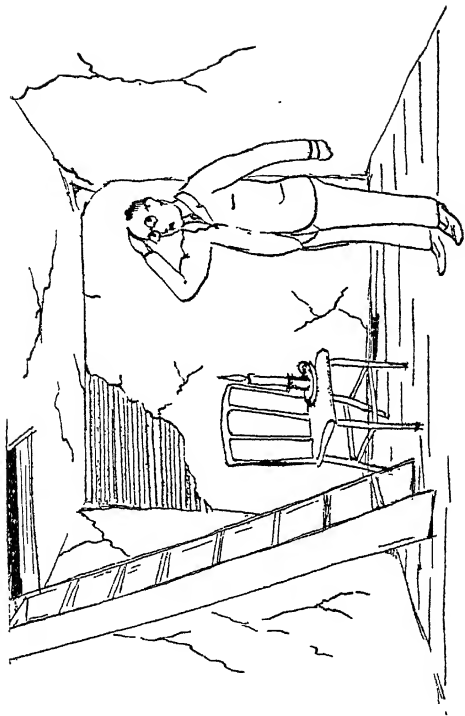
A detailed account of one of these recurrences of this troublesome dream dates from

## DREAMS

1897. The writer was passing his father's house in the twilight, and looking up to the second story he observed a lighted window. He asked himself in what room the light was burning, and was conscious of a fearsome thrill as he found that he could not tell. Urged by an impulse, he made his way to the attic, raised a trap-door, and descended by rude stairs into the place of mystery. It was a small, mean room; the plaster had fallen from large areas of the walls, exposing the laths. There was only one feature to show that anyone else had preceded the dreamer, but that was final and terrifying: on a chair there stood a lighted candle!

Twenty-three years later the writer tried once more to find the portentous room. He readily discovered the trap in the attic, but when he raised it he found that a narrow shaft extended through two lower stories of the house and opened into the cellar. This dream was devoid of any particular emotional coloring.

Though the scribe was greatly frightened in the dream of the enchanted walking-stick and



THE PLACE OF MYSTERY



## DREAMS

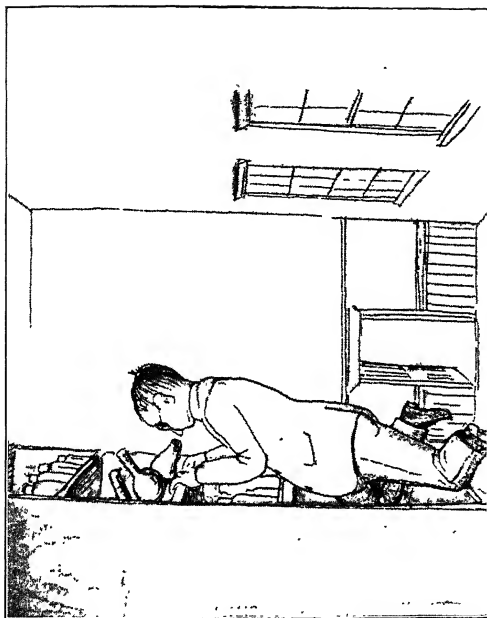
again in that of the strange room, it is not clear that he was in peril of any definable sort, nor is there the suggestion of the presence of death. This weighty influence appears in a paragraph entered in 1903. He thought that he entered a dark and cheerless house in company with his stepmother. As soon as the door was closed, they became aware of an evil odor. This grew stronger as they made their way from room to room. Both felt the oppressive sense of tragedy at hand. The stepmother said dolefully, "They say there is a curse on this village." The dreamer left her and turned with desperate resolution toward a black recess. The odor became the insupportable stench of a putrefying body, and he woke, his heart beating wildly and his thoughts immediately on his father who was then away and in poor health.

There have been dreams in which the emotion was more consistent with evident danger. Terror at the prospect of a fall has been experienced more than once. Here is a case in which the anxiety felt was divided between the dreamer's own safety and that of a collection of glassware. He attempted to reach the floor of a

## DREAMS

large store-room in a school building by means of a set of shelves. He entered from the story above and judged the descent to be about twenty feet. The shelves made an awkward ladder, but he had passed several of them and was gaining confidence when one tilted under his weight. It held a quantity of chemical apparatus. The dreamer struggled hard to save himself from a fall and also to keep the precious condensers and graduated flasks from coming down with him. It seemed a losing battle — and he woke.

Emotion has been most realistic when the dream has shown a loved one in difficulty. One would like to draw the conclusion that the strongest impulses of the subject are altruistic. But there is the consideration to be recognized that the second figure in a dream is often merely a detachment of the self. Love and pity felt for this second person may turn out after all to be self-love and self-pity. However, it will be well to suspend judgment as to this possibility. Whether the following dream was motivated by parental affection or whether it disguised an excessive regard for one's own



A TICKLISH DESCENT





## DREAMS

security, it was probably the most nerve-racking in the entire series.

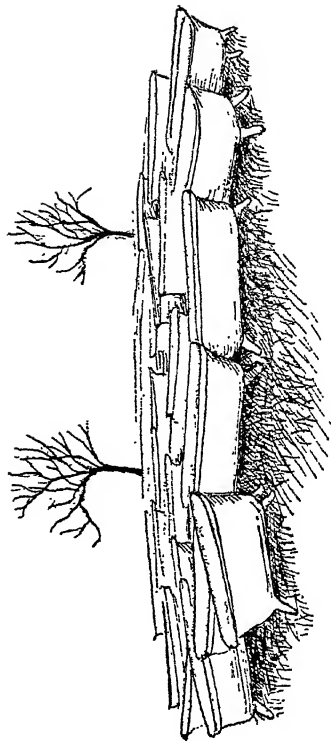
The dreamer, with his wife and little boy, then about five years old, started to cross Scollay Square. A light rain was falling. There were some cars passing and many people. The little fellow suddenly broke away from his father and mother and ran heedlessly across the shining asphalt. A car came swiftly toward him. The actual striking of the child was not seen, but a knot of horror-struck witnesses indicated the spot. The dreamer grasped his wife by the hand and they both ran toward the place, he sobbing, "Oh, dear — oh, dear!" The anguish was frightful. Before the distance was covered, the agonized father saw the severed leg of his boy, a brown shoe on the foot and the calf muscle twitching within the brown stocking. It was cut off at the knee. The next moment he caught a glimpse of the boy himself. He raised his head for a moment from the wet pavement, then laid it down. The tinge of blood spread from the body over an expanding area. The latest feeling recalled is the hope that the little chap did not suffer.

## DREAMS

There are certain emotions wont to be experienced in waking which have been scarcely noted in these dreams. The writer cannot say that he has ever been angry in a dream, though he is frequently — sometimes unreasonably — vexed by the passing affairs of the day. It seems to him that he has never had what could properly be called a religious or patriotic emotion while dreaming. He has dreamed a good many times of being in church, but his mood has been critical rather than reverential. When he sang "America," as previously recounted, he did it with great physical force but he did not put much heart into it. Yet he is normally quick to respond to the appeal of the Church and the Flag. The exaltation recalled in connection with the hearing of noble music comes nearest to what may be called a religious type.

Grief has entered these dreams with all its poignancy. All the other emotions illustrated have arisen unexpectedly from time to time, and could not be linked with current happenings in the life of the subject. But bereavements have laid siege to the attention, even





THE FIELD OF GRIEF

## DREAMS

in sleep. The resulting dreams have had a certain dignity and beauty which have made them appear unique. It is not fitting to deal with them in a mood of dispassionate analysis.

One dream may be cited as standing rather apart from the typical registrations of sorrow; it lacks, superficially at least, the dignity and beauty just claimed for the group. The dreamer looked across a wintry plain. It was overhung by lowering clouds. Closely massed to cover an acre or more of ground were hundreds of bathtubs. The feeling of desolation that prevailed can scarcely be communicated. It is recalled as paralyzing in its power. It indicated at once the heart-breaking fact beneath the slight though grotesque disguise. The bathtub outdoors,—heavy, bitterly cold, futile,—beyond question it is the modified image of a little white casket. The emotion seeking to reveal itself first enlarges its pitiful object and then multiplies it until the landscape contains little else.

## VI

### *The Personality of the Dreamer*

IT was said at the outset that an amateur attitude would be maintained throughout the course of this discussion. The writer does not presume to attack the dogmatic teachings of others or to develop any peculiar thesis of his own. It is his feeling that very few generalizations are permissible. The chief one which he is inclined to stress will probably not be disputed: it is, that dreaming sets one back toward childhood. Almost all the conduct and reasoning of dream life may be characterized as immature.

When the collection was begun, the compiler was twenty-two years old. At fifty-two he seems to have gained little or nothing in prudence and sagacity. His mental age has remained for a generation at about ten or twelve. He has accumulated information in his waking experience which he can utilize when he

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dreams; but while facts have been stored, there is no corresponding growth in wisdom. Evidence of this reversion to childish modes of thought is easily found. Much of it is in the earlier chapters, while more remains to be added.

It is natural to ask at this point whether the language used in dreams is childish. The impression is that it is not elaborate, but the vocabulary seems fair. There have been occasional bits of evidence to suggest that there are limitations in the verbal expression of ideas. One of these may be cited. The attention of the dreamer had been centred for a time on a large number of little chains which hung from the bulbs in a chandelier — an arrangement common enough in single lights but not usual in such a fixture as this. He heard these chains referred to as “candle strings.” This is just such a phrase as a child might have adopted. It is bungling and ungraceful, but it is concise as compared with any accurate equivalent which could be evolved. The coining of words which has been commented on is also a practice of children.



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A prominent trait in childhood is a partiality for one's plan or belief which denies all considerations that may be brought against it. Thus the boy cannot believe that it will rain when a picnic has been scheduled. Even when the clouds have gathered and the first drops are falling, he feels passionately that it *must* clear off. If he has rigged up a mechanical device, he can hardly bear to recognize the fatal imperfection which prevents it from working. A dreamer commonly shows the same intense devotion to his project and the same impatient dismissal of objections to it.

Some twenty years ago the writer was busied with the plans for a battleship. His readiness to undertake the task was in itself a manifestation of childish self-confidence. He proceeded to disclose a still more striking folly. It was specified in his plates that the flues between the furnaces and the funnels of the ship should be lined with ciliated epithelium. The purpose was to accelerate the draft. While the scheme appeared ingenious and gave the inventor a thrill of complacent pleasure, it involved the resolute denial of sundry stubborn facts.

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Heedlessness of consequences is a childish trait which is reproduced in dreaming. The subject once saw a cylinder of sheet-iron standing about a foot high and measuring perhaps four inches through. It was on a table. A rubber hose was connected with it and was assumed to be conveying gas. There was a small hole in the top of the cylinder and a slot in its curved surface. The probability that there was an explosive mixture inside was quite apparent to the dreamer. Nevertheless he was so reckless as to thrust a lighted splint into the lateral slot. The detonation which followed was terrific, the most tremendous phenomenon of its kind in the entire chronicle. The victim found himself blinded and staggering helplessly.

Here is a dream in which the reasoning powers will be found subnormal and sluggish while yet adequate to the solution of an elementary problem. A friend who was in the hospital had asked for the loan of a book, suggesting at the same time that it be light and easy to handle. The dreamer thought he might take a volume and saw it in two. A cut from

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the middle of the back to the free edge of the leaves would make a couple of manageable books out of a single heavy one. But he did not carry out his plan. It occurred to him that this would interrupt the continuity of the story. The fact that the idea was not at once put away as absurd betrays the limitations of the somnolent brain.

It is one of the moral shortcomings of the average child that he will deceive to escape the consequences of a fault. The dreamer has revealed the same disposition. He was twenty-nine years old when he had the following dream of which he is still ashamed. He thought that his pious and estimable aunt had come to pay him a visit. While he was standing close to her, he noticed that the neck of a bottle protruded from his left side pocket. He manoeuvred nervously to keep it out of her sight, slipped away to the pantry and hid it, when he breathed freely once more. He knew it to contain wine, but he had made up his mind that if he were hard pressed he would say that it was raspberry shrub. What a contemptible exhibition!

About fifteen years went by and the follow-

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ing dream revealed a similar slyness and fear of censure. The discipline of living had not modified the reduced self of the narrator. He was on a steamboat at night. He stood near the pilot-house and before him was the port light. He raised this from its box, noticing as he did so that the two electric wires were sufficiently slack to let it be lifted, and he began to cast its red rays upon various parts of the lower deck. A bearded officer immediately came up and put a stop to this. Without speaking and without roughness, yet with decision, he took the lantern and returned it to its place. The dreamer had been true to the psychology of his boyhood: there had been a wayward impulse, inability to withstand temptation, intense mortification when detected.

In certain instances dreams have seemed to present problems which were solved upon the spot by the dreamer. Once he came down from a wooded mountain and at the edge of the forest noticed a sign high in a tree-top. It read: "GARAGE 45 FEET NORTH OF THIS SPOT." He explained this very promptly. The sign was so placed as to be

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above the deep snows of winter when the garage itself might be utterly hidden. There was the customary feeling of accomplishment — akin to that of Jack Horner.

This is still another example of reasoning to a conclusion and being inordinately proud of the feat. The dreamer was in Holyoke, Massachusetts, and saw at the corner of a brick block the sign: "SMOOT MILLINERY PARLORS." It did not take him long to deal with this. He proceeded somewhat as follows: "The place is named for the Utah Senator. He has been alleged to be a polygamist. No doubt he has so many wives that their patronage is essential to the success of this establishment. Either from motives of gratitude or of policy the proprietors have adopted the name." There is something characteristic here in the refusal to admit facts not favorable to the conclusion — such as the remoteness of Holyoke from Salt Lake City.

The general inferiority of the sleeping as compared to the waking mind in answering ordinary questions comes out in two recent passages. In the first, the dreamer wasted

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time in considering which president of the United States lived to the most advanced age. He could not call up a solitary bit of information bearing on the matter. When he woke up he was still in doubt, but he could at least guess that it was John Adams, whom he knew to have lived past ninety. A little later he asked himself in a dream who was Health Commissioner of Massachusetts. He recalled the names of two former holders of the office, but he could not name the present one. On waking he did so without hesitation.

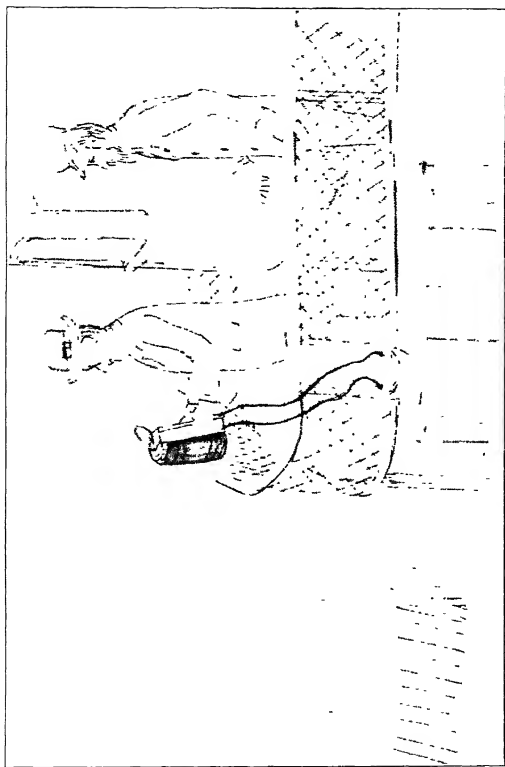
One bit of figuring while dreaming has been recorded and may be included in this chapter. It was not a remarkable feat but fair, straightforward mental arithmetic such as a high-school boy might have had at his command. The dreamer looked from a window and became interested in a large kite. It was being managed by several men and it had soared to a surprising height. The observer turned to a companion and commented: "Much as 1200 feet, is n't it?" "More, I should say," was the reply. Then the second spectator called to the fellows below and asked how much line they

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had let out. The answer was prompt: "5750 feet."

The dreamer persisted in his desire to find out the vertical height of the kite above the ground. He judged that the string had a slope of about 45 degrees. If this were correct then 5750 feet would be the length of the hypotenuse of a right isosceles triangle. The perpendicular could be found by squaring this number and extracting the square root of one half the product. He believed that he carried through this operation and presently said, "The kite is 4000 feet high." It is really about 4066. There is reason to suspect that this result was arrived at by guessing rather than by the rigorous mathematical method which was so lucidly expounded. The probability is that the two sides of the triangle were measured by the eye and the length of the unknown was quite accurately estimated.

Many years later the dreamer found himself obligated to say whether a battleship might have an area of as much as an acre. He went about this problem quite sensibly. He said to himself: "The deck-plan of the ship may be



A YOUTIFUL PRANK





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assumed to be equivalent to a rectangle 600 feet long and 75 feet wide. This has a surface of 45,000 square feet and is just in excess of an acre (43,560 square feet)." It may be pointed out that while this is considered to be a passage from a dream it might have run its course in a waking interval. The chief reason for supposing it to be a dream is that the question seems scarcely worth while.

One of the tendencies common to childhood and to dream life is the impulse to make excuses for one's sins of omission and commission. No doubt it is one of the weaknesses which we seldom entirely outgrow. It is conspicuous in this dream and associated with peculiarly feeble cerebration. The time for waking was at hand and the unwelcome necessity began to be adumbrated in the dreaming consciousness. "I must look at my watch," thought the subject. "Here it is — no, this is a five-cent piece but it will do just as well." Then, reading the date,— "1855, that is early!" — A feeling of exquisite relief and contentment.

Many dreams have been found amusing, but the justification for their being so has seemed

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slight as they have been reviewed. The impression prevails that the personality of the sleeper is easily entertained just as it is easily frightened — two juvenile characteristics. Things have been said in dreams which provoked mirth, but they have usually appeared inane in retrospect. Only one joke is recalled which had any noteworthy merit. It was rather technical in type and was regarded as a serious and literal statement at the time it was perpetrated. The dreamer was present at a meeting of an enthusiastic sort; the atmosphere was Methodist according to all traditions. There were frequent exclamations of endorsement of what was said: "*Amen — Amen — Amen!*" (A as in "fate," not as in "far.") The listener had never heard so many rejoinders of this kind. His final comment came drily and unexpectedly: "These people seem to have Amenorrhoea." One might be tempted to say that we have here an exception to the rule that the dreaming mind is childish; the critic appears sophisticated and cynical. But on the whole it is more than probable that this odd sally was not intelligent at all; it is no more than a parrot

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reproduction of a sound, with no thought of its meaning.

At rather long intervals in this series there have occurred dreams in which persons known to be dead have made their appearance. When this has happened, the sense of reality has been disturbing. Of course the attempt is made by the dreamer to explain the situation; in one case the solution was so simple and immediate as to clear away the mystery with an abruptness which was almost unwelcome. A brilliant young man who had been a victim of the influenza epidemic of 1918 stood close beside the writer as he sat at his desk. He viewed his visitor with awe and amazement. The handsome brown suit seemed familiar; so was the turn of the moustache. Deeply moved by wonder the dreamer cried out, "Explain!" The face looking down at him became gentle and pensive. "I am his brother," was the reply. If one were writing a story in which an apparition had to be accounted for, it would be difficult to find a more logical way out, or one which would more decisively put an end to whatever interest had been awakened. As a

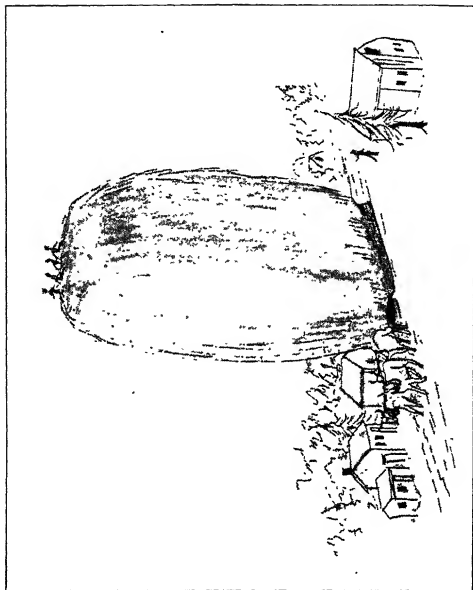
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literary artifice this was far from successful. It was just such a solution as a child might have invented.

Rather more striking as an emergence of sentiment was the following. The dreamer thought that the funeral of a friend was soon to occur and that he should send a tribute of some sort. So he went to a florist's shop and considered what would be appropriate. His eventual selection was not the usual spray of flowers, but a bare, branching twig bearing a large brown chrysalis. This was empty and a round hole at one end showed where the moth had made its escape. The choice was justified by a bit of reasoning which in waking retrospect is more impressive than dream logic is commonly found to be. The empty chrysalis was to figure as a symbol of resurrection. There is very possibly a connection between this dream and a rehearsal of Easter music which had been attended the evening before.

Curiously blending with this influence is a reminiscence of the juvenile classics of Jacob Abbott: in "Rollo's Museum" will be found





A MAMMOTH LOAD

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the story of the "hemlock seed" which turned out to be a chrysalis.

Occasional reference has been made to the habitual exaggerations of the dreaming mind. This has been illustrated in connection with sensations. We have seen that certain ones which are actually below the threshold in waking life may dominate dreams and be represented in them by terrific imagery. We have seen how the fall of a book may be dramatized as the plunge of a cannon-shot. We have seen numbers whimsically increased as in the prices of articles offered for sale. Still other examples of exaggeration or magnification may be included. A curious one was the dream "Of an enormous Load of Hay." The setting was the quiet street of a country village. It was winter and the load in question was supported by a low, massive sledge drawn by oxen. The dark bulk of hay rose to a height which amazed the beholder. It towered above the houses and the leafless trees. A number of people who occupied the perilous summit of the swaying pile were scarcely to be made out from below. "How high is it?" asked the dreamer, pro-



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foundly impressed. "Two hundred and twenty-five feet," was the instant reply of a native. That seemed about right; it really looked about as tall as Bunker Hill Monument.

Another example of magnification in the vertical dimension is the following. The top of Mount Washington was visited in a dream. The number of buildings clustered there was found to have greatly increased. There were several shabby and unattractive structures which the dreamer regarded with disfavor. From the midst of them rose a skyscraper which he knew to be 3000 feet in height. The dream was recognized later to be a composite of two pictures on exhibition at the local museum, one of the mountain and the other painted in downtown New York. There is a peculiarly youthful element apparent here — provincialism. The subject had been galled by the fact that his favorite mountain was only about 6000 feet high. He wished that it might be more worthy to be ranked with the peaks of the far west. So he had built it up by a fifty per cent addition.

Equally extravagant, and more amusing be-

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cause of the domestic difficulty involved, was the dream of a gun having the fabulous length of 400 feet. This had been obtained by the enterprising son of the dreamer, a lad of fourteen. The gun in question was not of unusual calibre; it was only as to its length that it was a monstrosity. The breech was accommodated in the front hall, but naturally it was necessary to let the barrel pass through a hole in the wall whence it extended across the lawn, the street, and the grounds of a neighbor. The father expostulated with his boy on the folly of such an acquisition. He pointed out that the gun could not be protected from the weather, that the cars would strike and bend it where it lay in the street, and that we had no right to let it overlie the property of other people.

The source for this dream which first suggests itself is the actual propensity of the lad to make ill-advised purchases or "trades." But this is curiously interwoven with another idea — the misgivings occasionally felt by the writer in regard to his radio antenna. A wire is stretched across the street to a tree in the yard of a neighbor. The arrangement is prob-

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ably illegal and has not been interfered with up to the present because it has escaped attention.

In one of the earliest entries in the collection a dream is described in which there was a railroad wreck. The train, which had been standing at a station, was struck from behind by a locomotive running rather slowly. The shock was not severe but the cars were derailed and somewhat shattered. The dreamer looked with solicitude at a passenger near him whose leg seemed to be jammed between two seats. But the man did not show signs of pain; he sat quite still for a moment and then something shifted and set him free. It is likely that nothing more violent than the entanglement of the sleeper's knee in the bed-clothes underlay this spectacle.

It is now possible to sum up some well-marked traits of the dreaming personality. It is, first of all, egotistical. The prevailing mood is one of self-satisfaction. The dreamer considers that he reasons admirably when in fact his logic is grossly at fault. He is proud of his

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inventions. Even in those exceptional passages in which there is sharp self-ridicule there is an underlying conviction of his own importance. This has made him sensitive, under certain conditions. More commonly he has been impudent and aggressive, displaying an excess of self-confidence.

In all this there is reminiscence of boyhood. And how familiar are the overstatements of adolescence! "My teacher has had a million proposals," said a school-girl. "Three thousand a day for a year," was her father's analysis. The psychology of dreaming is nearly akin to that of yellow journalism.

If, now, the dreamer is in many respects a youth, alert, well-informed, but injudicious and undisciplined, it follows that he has much in common with primitive man. There is the love of show, a partiality for ceremonial or pantomime, which — both in dreaming and in barbarism — may represent a compensation for an inadequate command of language. There is likewise a susceptibility to unreasoning and crippling fear.

Havelock Ellis has asked in his most stim-

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ulating book a very disturbing question: "Dreams are real while they last — can we say more of life?" Dreams are indeed a part of life. But we may still be justified in claiming that the dreamer is far below his best level. To sleep is to contract, to wake is to expand the sphere in which we live. To dream is to be committed to crass egotism and to sitting in the seat of the scornful. We wake to a broader vision, a more patient philosophy, a kindlier idealism.

